A Letter to a Member of Parliament *concerning* Trade; *and particularly the* Trade *of the* Spaniſh Weſt-Indies.

SIR,

AS I have always wiſhed well to the Intereſt of my Country, I readily comply with your Deſires, in publiſhing what I delivered in the Diſcourſe we had concerning Trade; and particularly Mr. *Puckle*'s Propoſal of Erecting a Company, to Trade to the *Spaniſh Weſt-Indies.*

Foreign Trade (by which alone Riches are encreaſed) has now ſo great an Influence on the Government of the World, that it

it ought to be the peculiar Care, both of Prince and People, of all Ranks, to encourage and promote it; especially in these Islands, which by their Scituation and Product are so well adapted for it.

Great Britain, as now United, (and with the Advantage of the Colonies we have in the *West-Indies*) is capable of commanding, in a great Measure, the Trade of the whole World: And tho' it is allowed on all Hands, That the Wealth, Glory and Strength of these Kingdoms, both by Sea and Land, depend upon the Largeness and Profitableness of the Foreign Trade, which is (or might be) carried on by us; yet no Regular Methods are, or have been, for many Years past, taken, to advance and secure the same: Nor have Persons been encouraged to propose Methods for effecting so great and valuable a Work. It seems to me, there are not many in this Nation, that have a *Genius*, or *Soul*, like some of our

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Anceſtors, to Attempt and Atchieve great Things; or but few of the Old *Roman* Spirit, who prefer the Publick Good to their own private Intereſt: Otherwiſe we might e'er now have been able to cut out our own Terms for a Peace. I remember very well, it was ſaid at the *Council-Board*, (in the Late King's Reign) when He was preſent, *That it was not difficult to propoſe a Method, whereby the Naval Power of* France *might be ſoon deſtroy'd*: Whereupon a *Great Man*, yet living, deſired the Gentleman who ſaid it, to come to him, and that he would be glad to Diſcourſe him upon that Point. The Gentleman went Once, Twice, and a Third Time, but could not gain Admittance; and was afterwards told the Reaſon was, becauſe he did nor Fee His *Grace's* Gentleman that waited in the Anti-Chamber; ſo his Propoſal was not heard. If the *French* King, or his Miniſters, did thus,

thus, he would not have ſo many Servants Eminent in their ſeveral Stations.

It ſeems a Fate upon *Great Britain*, that we ſo ſtupidly neglect what is our chiefeſt Intereſt to purſue; whilſt on the contrary, the *French*, (both Prince and People) and other Nations, are zealouſly bent to enlarge their Foreign Trade, which is the Source of all Riches: And with what Succeſs they have done it, and eſpecially the former, in a few Years, to the *Spaniſh Weſt-Indies*, all the World ſee, or at length will feel, if they wilfully ſhut their Eyes. But whenever Her Majeſty, or the Parliament, ſhall think fit to enourage ſuch as are capable of informing them the Means whereby *Great Britain's* Trade, and conſequently its Navigation, Strength and Power, may be exceedingly promoted, as the *French* King does, they will, in all Probability, find the Succeſs anſwerable. But I ſhall confine my ſelf at preſent to declare my Thoughts; particularly

larly of Mr. *Puckle*'s Propoſal of a Trade to the *Spaniſh Weſt Indies*: And I muſt own, that it is not only feaſable, if a right Method be entred upon, but a Noble and Neceſſary Undertaking; and without which I fear *France* will go a great Way to ſecure the beſt Part of that Trade to themſelves, before King *Charles* can recover Old *Spain*. But tho' the Profit of that Trade is vaſtly great, and may in a little Time (if well proſecuted) not only enrich the Nation, but prevent the Occaſion of ſending our *Specie* to the *Eaſt-Indies*; (which at preſent ſeems a Grievance) and afford many other Advantages: Yet in the Manner it is propoſed, I doubt whether there will be found Men that will run ſo great a Hazard, or advance a Sum that is neceſſary for ſo great an Affair, purely upon that Bottom. But if the Gentlemen who have that Trade in View, would undertake it effectually, and to Purpoſe, it might not be amiſs to conſider in

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particular, what a mighty Profit the Trade of *Negroes* [thither] affords, and of what an abſolute Neceſſity they are in the Mines; which would alſo be an Inducement to the *Spaniards* to entertain it the more readily. And the *Britains* being at this Time poſſeſſed of the greateſt Advantages for purchaſing them on the Coaſt of *Africa*, If the preſent *African* Company could be prevail'd with to admit of New Subſcriptions for a large Stock, and that the ſame Company ſhould be veſted with a Power to Trade to the *Spaniſh Weſt-Indies*; this in all Probability would fully anſwer the whole Deſign: Not only in producing an extraordinary Advantage, by the Trade to the ſaid *Weſt-Indies*, but even by the Trade to *Africa* it ſelf; which hitherto has been under Difficulties and Diſcouragements. This would be worthy the *Genius* of the *Britiſh Nation*: And by ſuch Means they would ſoon become Maſters of a Strength at Sea,

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answerable to their Valour: Whereby they would be a Match for all the Nations of *Europe* joyn'd together. And yet if this were accomplished, it would be necessary that such a Company should be obliged to furnish a sufficient Number of *Negroes* Yearly to our own Plantations: For it is not reasonable to Burden or Suppress one profitable Trade for the Advantage, or Enlargement, of another.

This might be further explained; and a great Deal might also be said concerning the Improvement that might be made both in the present *West-India* and *East-India* Trades: But I shall reserve that to see what Entertainment the present Proposal meets with.

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